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THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.

mineral colors. A great degree of perfection has been attained in this work, and we feel it a duty, while esteeming it a pleasure, to commend it to ladies who would, through their own industry, fill their closets and decorate their mantels and cabinets with elegant china. Various celebrated manufactures of china have been successfully imitated in the work of ladies in mineral colors, but none more successfully than the Royal Worcester, the possession of specimens of which, in the elegant vases, ewers, etc., that this manufactory sends out, is an aim with all ladies of artistic taste in house-furnishing. Some of the home-painted pieces of china, are indeed almost indistinguishable from the genuine. The creamy tint of the grounding, the ashen-olive that is sometimes given to handles and lips, the burnished and dead gold on the handles and bordering, and every color and tint in the floral designs relieving the delicate misty splashing seen in the beautiful and costly genuine ware have all been caught and admirably employed by the decorative artist, in charming productions. The Doulton china is also successfully imitated, and doubtless the time is coming when other famous manufactures will be shown side by side with successful counterfeits done at small price. For crude efforts, however, we would suggest the Barbotine work, and if out of the way of firing, you can finish your work with a coat of varnish.

MRS. JAMES L. FARROW. "You have from time to time given hints in regard to draperies suitable for mirrors and pictures, and I am happy to tell you I have profited much by what you have suggested. Recently I have had made an exquisite painted photograph of my daughter, who is away at school; it is mounted in a very handsome gilded frame, and rests on an elegantly carved mahogany easel. But in looking at it, it seems to me a sense of the freshness and delicacy of youth would be added to the picture, if tastefully draped. Can you help me in the matter, by a suggestion? Your resources must be abundant, drafting, as you do, from what is to be seen in a great city, and your fertility of idea has impressed me." Since thinking over the question implied in your note, it has occurred to us that the complexional tint of the young lady should be considered in the drapery for her portrait. The most pleasing of the home-decorated draperies for portraits, especially of ladies, are those of the silk bolting muslin, now so much used for dainty housefurnishing. If your daughter is a blonde, have for the scarf with which you would drape her picture, three yards of the full width of the bolting muslin. Decorate the ends of the scarf with painted designs of her favorite flowers, and trim with a ruffle of some light, cream-white lace. In draping, tie the scarf in a loose knot, rather nearer one end than the other, dispose in artistic carelessness about the picture, and set here and there a bow of ribbon of some tasteful delicate color. Should your daughter be a brunette, a handsome drapery for her would be of the bolting-gauze scarf, with the ends finished with massed medallions in white crochét-work, finished with silk fringe; or, instead of using white silk for the work, a color may be employed. These *crochét* medallions are about two inches in diameter; two or three rows of the medallions are run across the width of the scarf, and they are run up on the sides, describing a curve around the muslin. The interstices, or square spaces left between the medallions, are filled in with smaller medallions *chroché* in the same manner as the centre of the larger pieces. The fringe is tied in the edge of the work. Should the complexion of the young lady be of the middle tint, you can use your own judgment in the painted design with which you decorate your scarf, or in the color of the silk used in the *crochét* work, the ribbons corresponding. You would find the drapery described exceedingly charming.

TEA CHINESE FASHION.

A PRETTY device for making tea Chinese fashion at the home table and at afternoon teas, and for serving delicate refreshment to callers, consists of a hollow ball of gold or silver about the size of a walnut, suspended from a finger-ring by a slender chain four or five inches long. The ball divides in the middle, and the halves are hinged. It is perforated with innumerable holes. Sometimes it is made of gold or silver wire gauze. The hostess uses it in this wise: She opens the hollow ball, fills the halves with dry tea leaves, and clasps it shut. She then slips the ring from which it is suspended upon one of the fingers of the right hand. Filling a tea-cup with hot water, she lets the ball hang in the cup, and moves it back and forth and up and down until the water is colored to the desired strength. The strength of the tea, of course, depends upon the length of time the ball is dandled in the cup. The little ceremony is much pleasanter to the eye than the old way of pouring out tea, especially if the hostess be graceful and have a prettily modeled hand and wrist. Moreover, it produces an immeasurably finer cup of tea than can be had by any other method. At afternoon teas the hostess sits upon her divan, with the trinket suspended from her finger, and makes the tea at a table by her side. The tea

ball, as it is called, is, moreover, an encouragement to the custom, borrowed with it from the Chinese, of serving tea to callers. Hot water, of course, is always at hand, and this easy and graceful way of making the tea in the guest's presence forbids the suspicion that the hostess is putting herself to inconvenience in preparing it.

ROSE JARS AND CONFECTIONS.

SUBTLE, suggestive and dreamful as is the fragrance of flowers, it is a wonder that housekeepers do not manufacture their own stock wherewith to distill odors delicious as those from "Araby the blest." It takes but little time and attention, and the result is extremely satisfying. Among the recipes tried and not found wanting are the following:

Gather fresh roses in the morning as soon as the dew is off, or even before, if it be oppressively warm, in which case they should be plucked from their receptacles and dried before packing. See that no insects are concealed beneath the leaves and discard yellow centers and green sepals. Such fragrant roses as the old-fashioned damask are best; but all roses contain some essential oil. Then in a large bowl of glass or china place a layer of petals, then one of fine pure salt, lightly sprinkled. Set it well covered, in a dry, shady place, and add to it day by day all the petals that can be secured. Stir up the roses before adding a new layer, and so continue until the blossoms have disappeared, or long enough to make at least two weeks from the first gathering.

By this time the roses will be "cured," and will appear moist, —wet, perhaps, if they were not perfectly dry when plucked. If there is a quart in all, you have the foundation of a good *pot-pourri*. Now, transfer the stock to a glass fruit jar, on the bottom of which you have placed two ounces of bruised allspice, and as much stick cinnamon, broken into large pieces. The water, if any, should be first drained away. Here, allow it to remain one month, closely covered, stirring it up thoroughly every day from top to bottom.

It is now ready for permanent preservation. The blue and white Japanese jar is best to hold it, for it preserves the fragrance. Now, have ready an ounce each of mace, cinnamon, cloves and allspice, coarsely ground; the same quantity of sliced ginger root, and nutmeg; half as much anise seed, and four ounces of musk with six ounces of dried lavender flowers. Again strew the rose leaves in the permanent jar, alternating with these mixed spices, moistening from time to time with pure alcohol, using about one gill in all and the jar is complete.

If desired other flowers may be added as they open, such as violets, heliotrope, *mignonette*, rose geranium and tube-roses. This mixture makes a veritable *olla podrida* in which all fragrances are blended like strains of music from many instruments.

Small quantities of the otto of roses may be collected in this manner. Procure two glass jars, one small enough to fit in the neck of the other. Half fill the larger jar with rose petals, in the smaller place a piece of very fine, clean sponge soaked in pure olive oil. Invert the larger jar over the smaller, and set them in the sunshine. The rare volatile essence of the flowers will be concentrated in the end; as the petals dry replace them with the fresh. After awhile squeeze the sponge for a tiny quantity of the otto it contains, and preserve in a tightly-corked vial, or, better still rinse the sponge with pure alcohol and preserve that.

One of the first confectioners in this country describes in this way the way of making rose-leaves preserves, those confections which are served in Turkish hareems. Take a jar of which the mouth and bottom are the same size (like a Dundee marmalade jar), and in the bottom sprinkle a layer of crystallized sugar; over that place a layer of rose leaves, then alternate with sugar till the jar is filled. Be sure that sugar is the top layer. Paste two thicknesses of paper over the top and set in a cool dark place till fall. It is then fit to turn out and serve, and nothing can be more delightful for the eye or palate. Those who have used this confection once will never fail to prepare it afterward.

TO THE materials out of which mantels are made there seems no bounds; Majolica and terra cotta have long put in some doubted claims to acceptance. At the Paris Exhibition, the Dresden manufacturers rested their credit on china mantels, and the zinc-workers of France supplied specimens in the metal they handle; at least, these latter displayed taste, whilst the profusion of flowers intermingled with plaques in the porcelain or china, were proved incongruous and weak in effect. Just now, artistic wood mantels approximating in stately beauty to the colonial style, with its moderate ornament raised or sunk, are preferably selected by many to fine marbles. They accord well with over-mantels of wood; are more associated with the furniture, making a less distinctive figure in the *coup d'œil*, but withal, eminently appropriate, taken in connection with the surrounding woodwork.